



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to Serbia's Statement on the ISG

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 6, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of the following Countries: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey, the United States, and the United Kingdom, members of the International Steering Group for Kosovo (ISG), I would like to bring to the attention of all OSCE participating States the press statement issued by the Group following its inaugural meeting here in Vienna a week ago.

In line with that press statement, the countries belonging to the ISG would like to reiterate the following points:

- The ISG was formed in response to a formal request from Kosovo's leaders following Kosovo's declaration of independence on February 17th.
- Representatives of NATO, the European Union, and the European Commission also attended the ISG's inaugural meeting on February 28.
- The formation of the ISG was envisioned by the Ahtisaari Plan and is consistent with the objectives of UN Security Council Resolution 1244.
- The ISG's purpose is to help guide Kosovo's democratic development in the years ahead. The group will seek to promote good governance, multi-ethnicity and the rule of law. Kosovo's leaders have agreed to cooperate fully with the ISG in meeting these objectives.

Finally, the Countries belonging to the ISG would like to repeat the Group's call for all parties in Kosovo and the region to refrain from violence, destabilizing actions, or provocative rhetoric that condones or incites violence.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.